

CLAIMS

*Subj A*

1. A latching apparatus comprising:

5            a post member defining,  
              an elongated axis,  
              an elongated, laterally extending latching  
              surface defined at an outer radius from  
              said axis, and  
              an elongated, laterally extending  
10            releasing surface defined at an inner  
              radius from said axis, wherein said  
              outer radius is greater than said inner  
              radius;

15            a latching assembly defining a passage for  
              receiving said post member and including a  
              grip means extending at least partially into  
              said passage for,  
              effecting a grip between said post member  
              and said latching assembly when said  
              grip means engages said latching  
20            surface, and  
              releasing said grip between said post  
              member and said latching assembly when  
              said grip means engages said releasing  
              surface; and

25            a moving means for,  
              moving said latching surface into  
              engagement with said grip means,  
              whereby said grip is effected between  
              said post member and said latching  
              assembly, and  
              moving said releasing surface into  
              engagement with said grip means,  
              whereby said grip is released between  
30            said post member and said latching

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*A*  
*could*  
assembly.

2. ~~Apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said releasing surface defines a smooth surface.~~

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3. Apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said latching surface defines a notched surface.

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4. Apparatus of Claim 3, wherein said notched surface includes, at least, a plurality of teeth.

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5. Apparatus of Claim 1,  
wherein said grip means includes, at least, a ball, and

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wherein said latching means further comprises,  
an inner shell defining said passage and  
further defining a radial opening in  
said inner shell, wherein said ball is  
located in and radially movable within  
said radial opening,

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an outer shell positioned outside said  
inner shell, wherein said inner shell  
is axially slid able in a first  
direction and a second direction with  
respect to said outer shell, said outer  
shell including, at least, a tapered  
portion defining a tapered inner  
surface adjacent to said ball, and  
a biasing means for biasing said inner

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shell axially in said first direction  
such that said ball is biased into  
engagement with said tapered inner  
surface, whereby said ball is biasly  
urged radially inwardly into said  
passage, wherein said biasing means

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*a  
Contd*

~~accommodates movement of said inner shell in said second direction to accommodate radial movement of said ball out of said passage.~~

*add  
a  
B?*

*cult  
C'*